

The Character Quarterly

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*"Good character is more
to be praised than
outstanding talent.
Most talents are,
to some extent, a gift.
Good character,
by contrast, is not given
to us. We have to build it
piece by piece - by
thought, choice, courage,
and determination."*

-- John Luther --

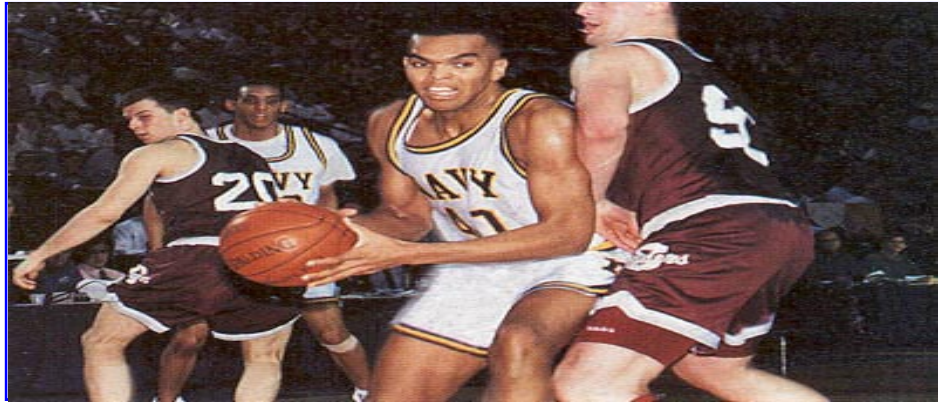


What is Sportsmanship?

By LT Steve Milewski, '95

During the January intercessional, the athletes of the Brigade and coaches of the varsity athletic teams participated in a seminar chaired by Athletic Director Jack Lengyel, NCAA Compliance Coordinator Tom Bates, and Women's Track Coach Carla Criste to discuss "Sportsmanship and the Naval Academy". The goal of the session was to define sportsmanship through an active discussion among the midshipmen, coaches, and facilitators using scenarios and recent examples of both proper and improper conduct on the playing fields of college and professional sports. The facilitators desired to increase the awareness of the Brigade, coaches, and staff regarding the ramifications of their behavior on the field, sidelines, and in the stands.

Mr. Bates defined sportsmanship as "ethical conduct on the athletic field or court by athletes, coaches, referees, and fans." In today's world of college and professional sports, individualistic behavior and unsportsmanlike conduct are becoming more and more commonplace. ESPN recently conducted a survey of coaches, players, and fans in which 80 percent stated that sportsmanship is on the decline.



The midshipmen and coaches grappled with different scenarios regarding proper, or improper, displays of sportsmanship. For example, while attending an Army-Navy sporting event you witness a few midshipmen sitting close by in the stands obnoxiously screaming derogatory comments at Army's top player. Is this behavior acceptable? What would you do? Tell them to stop? What if one of them is your close friend? Would you sit there and do nothing? On how many occasions have you witnessed coaches lashing referees with verbal abuse? Does this behavior constitute good sportsmanship? What is a coach's responsibility towards his or her team in the area of sportsmanship?

Sports do not build character. They reveal it.
- John Wooden -

*Do you know
what my favorite
part of the game is?
The opportunity to play.*
~ Mike Singletary ~

Or while playing in the game itself you repeatedly receive "cheap shots" and a steady stream of expletives directed at you from an opponent known to play dirty. Do you seek out opportunities to underhandedly do the same to him? Or do you continue to just play hard and clean?

Not surprisingly, the reactions and opinions displayed by the athletes and coaches differed greatly. The taunting of players by fans, obscenities directed at referees by coaches, or the "trash talking" and delivering of "cheap shots" by players on the field are just a few of the examples discussed that are sadly becoming more of the norm rather than the exception in today's athletic contests.

USNA is committed to playing our best and winning with character and class in everything we do. As stated by Mr. Lengyel, it is the mission of the Naval Academy to:

*"develop an attitude throughout
USNA that it is honorable
to play, coach, and
cheer our teams
in a sportsmanlike and ethical
manner and hold our people
accountable at every level".*





The Commandant's Considerations

An Interview with Captain Locklear

By MIDN 3/C Brian Ray

Whenever a unit changes leaders, personnel have questions about how the goals, missions, and operations of the unit will change under new leadership. Accordingly, the Character Quarterly wanted to find out the new Commandant's thoughts on character issues within the brigade and how he hopes to affect America's future Naval Officers.

On 20 December 1999, Captain Samuel J. Locklear took over as the U.S. Naval Academy's 78th Commandant. CAPT Locklear, a 1977 USNA graduate, came to the Academy following a tour as Executive Assistant to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations in Washington D.C. The Commandant has previously served at USNA as a company officer.

The Commandant admits, "If you boil down what the Naval Academy is all about, it's about Character Development." While admitting the importance of academics, athletics, and discipline, to CAPT Locklear the Academy's main mission is to provide officers capable of "protecting the Constitution in a totally uncompromising manner."

This is the Commandant's third time to serve at the Academy and though culturally and politically the US is continually changing, "people are fundamentally the same," says the Commandant. "Today's society has different things pressing on them that make the business of character development interesting and challenging." CAPT Locklear remembers when he was a midshipman and walking to football games with "protesters along the marching grounds." But today as the public eye begins to focus less and less on the military, the Commandant feels it is important to focus on keeping the military attractive to quality future officers.

Within the Brigade, Captain Locklear sees cynicism as a problem ... a cancer that eats away at the heart of any quality organization. He admits that cynicism "has existed here in one form or another since [the academy] began." According to the Commandant, cynicism "is part of being young and living in a free society." The cynicism becomes a problem when it begins to damage the organization. CAPT Locklear adamantly believes that "people and the individual are the heart of any organization." Problems in the Brigade occur when "cynicism attacks another shipmate."

"people and the individual are the heart of any organization."

Along these lines, the Commandant explains that he temporarily canceled the Log Magazine because "it turned from being a vehicle for humorous satire, that uplifted the organization, to a vehicle for gross cynicism, laced with overt sexism and racism." Captain Locklear feels that the Brigade would have been disappointed in him if he had not stopped the last issue of the Log, because he would not have done the right thing.

"All right, they're on our left, they're on our right, they're in front of us, they're behind us... they can't get away this time"

--Chesty Puller--

Another issue of importance to the Commandant is personal accountability. "The demanding accountability here is an integral part of midshipmen development." While few realize it while they are here, standards of accountability help create better officers.

Captain Locklear feels that 98 percent of the brigade is extremely accountable and doing the right thing. His major goal is to continue to develop leaders of character to do their best in the fleet.

"Honesty is something that never wears out."

-Waylon Jennings-

Honorable Mention

Sometimes it's a little thing you do that makes a big difference.

At the Army Navy game last year, when it became obvious that Navy would reign victorious, MIDN A went to the concession stand. He purchased several sodas and two Phili-cheese steak sandwiches. Civilian B who was working the concession stand, however, only charged him for one sandwich. Upon noticing the discrepancy, MIDN A immediately told Civilian B. She smiled and said. "It is nice to see people who really value honor and integrity. Thank you."

And then, Navy beat Army.

The Major Decision

by MIDN 2/C Andrew Crawford

In the next few days, the Fourth Class will be making a decision that will greatly influence their futures — they will choose their academic majors. Although, plebe's choice of major will affect the next three years of life at USNA more than it will their naval career options, it will also establish a foundation of thinking processes that they will carry with them beyond their naval careers.

As midshipmen, we are in a unique position relative to our civilian counterparts. We have greater freedom in choosing an academic major since our major will not affect our job selection after graduation. For example, a chemistry major from Columbia may have a hard time landing a job with an investment firm, while at USNA, an English major or an aerospace engineering major has the same chance of getting a pilot billet (assuming they are both physically qualified).

Midshipmen were not always given a majors choice: the majors system is a phenomenon of only the last three decades in our 150-year history. The origins of the current system can be traced back to 1959, when RADM Charles Melson ('27) began the Academy's "academic revolution." Understanding that the curriculum was lacking in diversity, the number of classes offered was increased from 40 to 200 under his command. A minors system was introduced in 1963 that allowed midshipmen to choose six elective classes in addition to their forty core classes, and more graduate scholarship opportunities were put in place.

By the time ADM James Calvert ('43) took over as Superintendent amidst the turbulent environment of the mid-sixties, an important question had come to the surface. Which is the most crucial mission of the Naval Academy: the professional or the academic education of midshipmen? To describe this conflict, ADM Calvert, a submariner, often used the metaphor of the democratic Athens and warrior-state Sparta, and stated that "Annapolis became world famous as a training institution that produced effective

leaders, not as an educational institution that produced renowned scholars."

ADM Calvert believed that the emphasis should shift from "what every graduate must bring to the Fleet" to "what every Class must bring to the Fleet." He instituted the Majors Program in 1969, consisting of 24 majors in 18 academic departments, including a management department. As in any long conflict, progress in the educational realm of the Academy led to a counter reaction in the early seventies to refocus on professional development. Unlike in Athens and Sparta, a compromise was reached: a new Mission Statement, the one that we know today.

*"When placed in command
--- take charge!"*

-- General Norman Schwarzkopf --

Once the majors system was in place, another important question arose. Which major should midshipmen choose? Before former Secretary of the Navy John Lehman abolished it in 1984, a quota was in place that fixed the number of humanities and social science majors at under 20 percent. Secretary Lehman, a naval aviator who believed that humanities majors should comprise 70 percent of Annapolis graduates, said "There is absolutely no reason why the captain of a nuclear submarine has to be a nuclear engineer. Engineering is one's profession. It has nothing to do with whether I'm educated or not." Lehman noted that the technical knowledge necessary to meet the needs of one's warfare community would be acquired through training schools — i.e., flight school for pilots, nuclear power school for submariners — not during one's undergraduate program. The percentage of humanities majors in the Brigade increased from 19.5 percent in 1984 to 36.3 percent in 1991.

During the heightened tensions of the Cold War, the issue of studying engineering versus humanities and social science took center stage at Alumni Hall and in Washington; there was an effort to push the growing number of humanities majors back towards engineering, in order to meet the technical demands of the nuclear Navy

needed to defeat the Soviets. Former Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Carlisle Trost believed that while majors such as English or History would provide graduates with "broad knowledge," without a technical background "you will always be a wallflower in the ballroom of progress." In his 1989 address to the plebes, then Superintendent, RADM Virgil Hill stated that the skills of non-technical majors may not easily meet the Navy's needs, calling them "special cases," and saying, "The first test of a good leader is to... know his missiles."

While only a midshipman myself, surely swept up in my current environment and without a clear perspective, I have found from conversations with graduates and other Naval officers that the needs of the Navy are also met by those who study the humanities. It's interesting to note that our civilian leadership has strong foundations in the humanities and social sciences: Secretary of the Navy Danzig, received a philosophy degree as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford; Secretary of Defense Cohen studied Classical languages as an undergraduate; and our Commander-in-Chief was a political science major at Georgetown, studied law at Yale, and also studied philosophy as a Rhodes Scholar.

Still, the question of what midshipmen should study is still in debate. The Naval Academy does not have a pre-med or a culinary arts major because it exists to produce leaders, not specialists. A leader is first and foremost a communicator, a constant link between superiors and subordinates, interpreting messages and then effectively and accurately passing them on. For the military officer, situations may arise that cannot be solved with a procedural checklist or sequence of contingency plans. In these situations, our only resources remain our internal knowledge of the right course of action and our ability to communicate it: therein lies the merit of the humanities majors.

As ADM Calvert said, each individual brings their own skills to create a strong Class of graduates for the Fleet. Maybe the first test of a good leader is not to know their missiles, it is to know their men. My question for the Class of '03 is this: What do you want to study for the next three years? Know what your interests are and run with them.

CHARACTER: The Crowe Way

by MIDN 2/C Frank Magallon

I recently had the opportunity to sit down with ADM Crowe, USN-Ret, and talk with him about his thoughts on and experiences with the issue of character. We spoke at great length about what it meant, what it should mean, and basically how it fits into the grand scheme of leadership. His responses to my questions provided an insight that went well beyond the typical midshipman rhetoric we learn here. They were “salty” and common sensical, yet rung with an air of dynamicism that made me re-evaluate what I have traditionally thought of as “character”.

On my way to meet the Admiral, I stopped a few of my shipmates in the hall and asked them what they thought character really meant. I figured, what better way could there be to find out the brigade’s opinions than to stop random mids, toss a question at them, and gauge their immediate, unrehearsed answers. Out of the ten people I talked to, seven of them recited “Honor, Courage, and Commitment” or slight derivations thereof. I didn’t find it all that surprising. After all, I have given the same blanket response myself many times. To be completely honest, I had never really given it much consideration beyond that. But, when I sat down with ADM Crowe, I received a very different slant on things:

MIDN: “Sir, a lot of people, especially mids, assume character to be synonymous with our core values of Honor, Courage, Commitment. Would you agree?”

ADM: “I have a problem when you try to lump character into three words like that. Character is not that simple; it means a whole lot more than that.”

MIDN: “How so, sir?”

ADM: “Well there’s several ways. First of all, it means sticking to your guns. There’s something to be said of a man’s character when he sticks to his guns, and that’s important. Leaders are expected not

to give in easily; it’s their job not to. However, it doesn’t mean you should be closed-minded to good ideas.”

MIDN: “How do you know when to draw that line?”

ADM: “You’ll know, and a big part of that will come from listening to your people. If you listen, and are competent in what you’re doing, you’ll be fair and and consistent. [Those] are the keys to good leadership. Besides, to not listen is absurd. The biggest roadblock to an officer is getting over his own ego. Once he can do this, the job becomes a lot easier. However, an ego, just like all things, is good in moderation. [smiling]”

*“... a mind is like a parachute;
it won’t do you any good if it
won’t open when you need it.”*

MIDN: “So I guess character plays a pretty big part in your level of open-mindedness?”

ADM: “Yes, it does. the best way to describe character is to look at it from this perspective: How well will he accept responsibility? A man’s character can be judged by the way he reacts under pressure. Is he graceful about it? Will he collapse? Those are all good tests of a man’s true nature. That also makes a big impact on how open he’ll be to new ideas from his people. You see, a mind is like a parachute; it won’t do you any good if it won’t open when you need it. Closed-minds are for the birds.”

MIDN: “[chuckling] Yes, sir.”

ADM: “Just observe how he does in the long race. A man with character will be consistent. He’ll do what he says he’s going to do. He may have to compromise on occasion, but he’ll only do it enough to get what he needs to get done. A certain degree of stubbornness does pay off. Take a look at George Washington ... he was an enormous benefit to our society



ADM Crowe shares his thoughts with midshipmen during a Political Science class.

and his level of character was unquestionable. That’s another thing I recommend: read. Read biographies. Read about people. You learn this way; you come to see how great people dealt with certain things, and you can incorporate it for your own.”

Our conversation continued on, and by its end I had quite a bit to ponder. I had never actually thought of character as more than a list of qualities, a compilation of characteristics. But, when you stop to take a look at character from the perspective that ADM Crowe takes, it just makes sense that the whole would be greater than the sum of its parts. I think he was trying to convey the message that the application of one’s abilities vice the mere presence of these qualities is what actually constitutes character. The willingness to put them forward in a manner exemplary to one’s troops is, as he said, “the key-stone of leadership.” It is by all means Honor, Courage, and Commitment, but it is also how a leader takes those qualities, shapes them, and makes them a part of who he is.

(ADM Crowe (USN-Ret) served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For this year’s Olin Seminar, ADM Crowe is teaching International Security in the Political Science Department at USNA.)

My Life-Shaping Experience

by MIDN I/C Scott Montgomery

Late last semester I received notice that I was going to be the Brigade Sub-Commander for the spring semester. For some this may not mean much, but to me this was a tremendous accomplishment. Applying to the Naval Academy while in high school was my own version of mission impossible. I spent too much time waxing my truck and too little time studying during my tenure in high school. I did, however, dedicate myself to our high school junior ROTC program, an undertaking that propelled my desire to attend the Naval Academy and ultimately become an officer in the naval service.

I attended the New Mexico Military Institute through the Naval Academy Foundation program after high school. I did well at NMMI and decided to set goals for when I reached Annapolis. One of my goals was to be the Brigade Commander. I came close to reaching my goal, but one night in January I threw it all away.

On Friday, January 21st, some friends and I got together for dinner and drinks at a local bar. I drove that evening, which meant that I was responsible for ensuring that I was okay to drive at the end of the night. In my mind I believed that if I drank only one drink an hour, I would be fine when it came time to drive home. When the gathering ended, I had consumed five drinks in five hours. I drove several friends back to the Yard that evening, one person was even sober. I did not ask that person to drive because I firmly believed that I was not impaired and was capable of operating my vehicle.

When I got on the Yard I was stopped by the DOD police for speeding. The officer smelled alcohol on my breath, arrested me and took me to the state police barracks for a breathalyzer test. I failed and was issued a ticket for DUI. I was in a state of shock. I could not believe what had occurred as I sat, handcuffed, in the back of the DOD vehicle.

The next morning, I hoped that the previous night was merely a nightmare, but it was not. I felt that the first thing I should do was to inform my immediate superior,

the Deputy Commandant, of what happened. I went to his house Saturday morning to tell him. Subsequently, I went to the homes of my Battalion Officer, my Company Gunny, and the Marine Representative. My reasoning for seeing each of these gentlemen was twofold. First of all, I wanted to inform them of what I had done. Secondly, I wanted to apologize for disappointing them through my lack of solid judgment. I wanted each of them to know how disappointed I was in myself. These gentlemen and many more placed great trust in me, expecting me to set the example and make the right decisions. But I failed. This all happened five days before my class' service assignment night. Since my first choice was Marine Corps, I felt it was my duty to also inform the senior Marine on the Yard.

My most difficult challenge was yet to come, telling my parents what I did. My parents, like any, were so proud of what I had accomplished. They were looking forward to watching me march out the front doors of Bancroft Hall during noon meal formation. Now all of that is gone, and I have no one to blame but myself.

Dealing with a DUI is tough, but being the Brigade Sub-Commander and dealing with a DUI is even tougher. The following Monday, I asked the Commandant of Midshipmen if he would accept my resignation as the Brigade Sub-Commander. I felt that I should resign because with my position came the added responsibility to set the example, which I failed to do. The following morning I apologized to the Brigade for my error in judgment and said that I felt it was my duty to resign. That was the last thing that I ever thought I would have to say, and one of the toughest things I have ever had to do.

Now I am serving my punishment with restriction musters and marching tours. This, quite possibly, has been the most difficult experience of my life. I think that it may become one of the best experiences of my life, because of what I have taken away from it. I have been extremely humbled by this incident, I am no longer incapable of making a life-altering mistake. Now I realize how precious life is and easily your dreams can be lost. I am fortunate that all I lost was my stripes and some pride, but I think that I have gained more than what I lost. I have made

it my mission to do my best to prevent others from making the same mistake. I talk to people about the dangers of drinking and driving and I hope to impress upon them the fragility of life. Nothing is sacred, and in an instant, your life can change forever.

"The best use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts life."

--William James



You've Got E-Mail

Every now and again, we receive an e-mail that inspires us or affects us in some way. Sometimes, you do not want to just delete it, but you may not know what else to do with it. We've shared a few of these in the past and feel that this would make a good Character Quarterly article to continue in the future.

"Now I see why powerful people often wear sunglasses —the spotlight blinds them to reality. They suffer from a delusion that power means something (it doesn't). They suffer from the misconception that titles make a difference (they don't). They are under the impression that earthly authority will make a heavenly difference (it won't).

Take this quiz.

Name the ten wealthiest people in the world.

Name the last ten Heisman trophy winners.

Name the last ten winners of the Miss America contest.

Name eight people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.

How about the last ten Academy Award winners for best picture or the last decade's worth of World Series winners?

How did you do? I didn't do well either. With the exception of you trivia hounds, none of us remember the headliners of yesterday too well. Surprising how quickly we forget, isn't it? And what I've mentioned above are no second-rate achievements. These are the best in their fields. But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

Think of three people you enjoy spending time with.

Name ten people who have taught you something worthwhile.

Name five friends who have helped you in a difficult time.

List a few teachers who have aided your journey through school.

Name half-a-dozen heroes whose stories have inspired you.

Easier? It was for me, too. The lesson? The people who make a difference are not the ones with the credentials, but the ones with the concern."

*"A man wrapped up
in himself
makes a small bundle."*

-- Benjamin Franklin --

Integrity and Professional Ethics

by MIDN 3/C Alpa Patel

Sometimes good opportunities are as easy as hitting the reply button to those often times unread e-mails. On the 27th of January I was given the opportunity to attend the Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics. I was one of six midshipman who attended the two-day conference in Washington D.C. Within the confines of the D.C. Hilton ballroom, midshipman, cadets, and officers gathered to discuss, ponder, and debate the moral and ethical issues plaguing the world today. Topics ranging from military intervention in Somalia to the honor concepts and codes of the four major service academies were touched upon.

The keynote address by General Charles Krulak, former Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, set the tone for the twentieth JSCOPE conference. In his eyes, integrity above all else is key in today's military. Understanding ethics, according to the General, is the foundation necessary to the commitment to the inviolate principles inherent in the armed forces. Though brief in his remarks, General Krulak's sincerity concerning the intangibles of ethics were well conveyed and well received by the all-military audience.

After General Krulak's opening remarks, the conference began to take shape. For two days officers and cadets from all services, including Canada and New Zealand, presented papers in two separate ballrooms. Attendees to the conference were given the option of choosing which discussions they wished to participate in. After the presentation of papers concerning a specific ethical topic, a question and answer session ensued. The format allowed for great debate on the sometimes controversial issues. Intermingled with the presentation of papers by military personnel were papers presented by civilian professors of philosophy. This diversity in views added to the power and legitimacy of the conference.

One debate of particular interest to

*"Try not to become
a man of success,
but rather try to become
a man of value."*

-Albert Einstein-

the cadets and midshipmen involved in the conference, centered around a paper presented by Cadet Michael Starz of the United States Military Academy. In his paper, entitled "The Non-toleration clause: The Bedrock of the USMA Honor Code," Starz attempted to explain and defend the honor codes of USMA, USAFA, and USCGA against that of the honor concept of USNA. Heated debate between the midshipmen and cadets ensued. The true necessity of non-toleration clauses, inherent in the codes of the other three service academies but absent in the concept set forth by USNA, was brought into question. The questions and lines of reasoning that were engendered from the lively discussion did not change policy, but they did bring light to a very serious and pertinent issue—the necessity to place honor on the highest pedestal. With that, General Krulak words were reiterated --- Integrity, above all else, is key in today's military.

In the end, by simply replying to a seemingly random e-mail, I along with other midshipman and cadets were able to discuss and openly debate the ethical and moral ramifications of many pertinent issues facing the military today. Listening to the ideas set forth in the papers that were presented in conjunction with the general sentiment conveyed by the officers in attendance, it became clear that a strong foundation in ethical reasoning is essential in today's military. Conferences, such as JSCOPE, provide an outstanding forum to add to this important foundation.

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*"Human kindness has never weakened the stamina
or softened the fiber of a free people.
A nation does not have to be cruel in order to be tough."*

-Franklin Delano Roosevelt-

Do's and Don'ts

by CDR E.A. Sternaman

When I was a young LTJG, a senior officer once told me that the Navy was different than other services in that it provided guidance on what you "can't do"—leaving a lot of room for flexibility, good judgment and even a little creativity by the Naval Officer to determine what can be done. Although, I never verified this to be true in the Navy or with any other service, I thought this sounded like a great philosophy and it certainly reinforced in me that I had made the right choice --- Navy.

Recently I've begun to wonder if providing "can't and don't" guidance is really the best philosophy afterall. As a result of politics and a tragic incident in Kentucky (where a soldier was beaten to death because he was alleged to be a homosexual), the original "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy has been expanded to include "Don't Pursue, Don't Harass". Maybe it should also include "Don't Beat, Don't Kill". I'm sure you could think of many

other "Don'ts" that should be addressed.

The problem with providing "can't and don't" guidance, is that it is difficult to imagine all the other options that fall outside that guidance. We assume people will use common sense and act "appropriately", I guess if they did that we wouldn't need so many guidelines in the first place. Each additional "don't" seems to be generated from someone who crossed the line of common sense and appropriate behavior, and now a new rule is provided to better direct the next individual.

Maybe what we really should instill is a guidance that provides the "Do's" and then work to reinforce and remind what it is that we should be "Do-ing". As I sit here at my desk, I look at USNA's Guiding Principles on my office wall and that's a pretty good list of "Do's".

It just seems to me if we spent more time doing the "Do's", there wouldn't be much of a need for all the "Don'ts".

USNA's GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Uphold the standards of the Naval Academy.
- Be a person of integrity.
- Lead by example.
- Strive for excellence without arrogance.
- Do your best.
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Tolerate honest mistakes from people who doing their best.
- Speak well of others.
- Seek the truth.
- Keep a sense of humor and be able to laugh at yourself.

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